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ABSTRACT

This learning module, which is part of a three-block series intended to help human service workers develop the skills necessary to solve the problems encountered in their daily contact with elderly clients of different cultural backgrounds, deals with communication and adjustment from the standpoint of Ukrainian culture. The first two sections present background information on the Ukraine, migration from the Soviet Union to Canada, and the general objectives of this module. Discussed in the next two sections are verbal communication practices (language barriers, self-expression, and possible constraints) and nonverbal communication patterns. A section on adjustment to life events examines the following topics: family, religious conviction, personal possessions, disability of other family members, sexual disability, marriage and remarriage, addition of a new family member, family get-togethers, friends, change in eating patterns, recreational activities, and personal finances. Psychological reactions to selected life events are described in the next section. The final section deals with ways in which human services workers can facilitate life adjustment among Ukrainian Canadians. Lists of selected readings and related films are appended. (MN)

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BLOCK B
Cultural Gerontology

MODULE B.1.1
Communication and Adjustment

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COMMUNICATION AND ADJUSTMENT

MODULE B.1.1

THE ELDERLY SERVICE WORKERS' TRAINING PROJECT WISHES TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION OF THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE "COMMUNICATION AND ADJUSTMENT" MODULE.

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Introduction

Before you begin this module, it is perhaps worthwhile to remind you of certain essential historical and social facts regarding the Ukrainian culture.

As you will recall in module B.1 on "Ukrainian Culture," since 1795, Ukraine has been a captive at the hands of various nations. These nations, while dominating the Ukrainian people, have sought to suppress and eliminate Ukrainian national identity. In fact, it was Russia's policy to subjugate Ukrainian culture. The use of the Ukrainian language, Ukrainian education and all Ukrainian language publications were forbidden.

By 1917, Ukraine declared her independence, however, this independence was shortlived. The eastern lands soon fell to the Communists, and the western lands were divided among Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

Between the years of 1921 to 1934, Ukraine experienced two demographic phenomena. The famine of 1921-22 and the artificially imposed Famine Holocaust of 1932-33 ordered by Stalin that took over seven (7) million innocent Ukrainian lives. This genocide, was a deliberate creation of a bureaucratic mind bent on the punitive destruction of an entire race of people.

After World War II, all Ukrainian territories fell to the Communists. Today, Ukraine has the status of a

republic of the Soviet Union and its name has been officially changed to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, (although most Ukrainians outside Ukraine refuse to acknowledge the legitimacy of this name). Under Communist dictatorship the Ukrainian people are deprived of many of the civil liberties that Canadians take for granted. Unlike Canada, Ukrainian national identity is continually being suppressed by the Soviet regime. The ultimate aim of this suppression is the complete elimination of Ukrainian national identity, russifying the populace and eliminating opposition to Soviet rule.

It is against this background that we are able to see why, when the Ukrainians were given the opportunity to emigrate to Canada, they seized this as a chance to better their existence and did so in large numbers. The Ukrainians came to Canada in four major waves: 1) 170,000 Ukrainian immigrants, mainly illiterate farmers, arrived between the years of 1896 to 1914, 2) 60,000 Ukrainian immigrant farmers and political emigres, this time mostly literate, arrived between the years of 1917 to 1939, 3) 30,000 Ukrainian political emigres, better educated than the previous two waves with many skilled craftsmen and professionals amongst them, arrived between 1946 and the mid-1950s, and 4) a rather small undetermined amount between the late 1960s and into the 1980s.

Despite the predjudice, the discrimination, and the many other hardships that Ukrainian immigrants faced, to a large extent, they became successful in their own adjustment to and settlement of the Western prairies.

Ukrainian pioneers in Canada helped build the Canadian west and successive generations of Ukrainian Canadians have become an integral and visible part of Canadian culture. The traditional values and lifestyles may have undergone tremendous change in contemporary Canadian society. However, as the Communication and Adjustment modules will show you, most older Ukrainian adults; still prefer to communicate in the Ukrainian language, prefer to associate with their own kind, prefer to live with their family as opposed to an institutional setting, tend not to remarry, try to observe traditional Ukrainian customs and all major holidays, favour traditional Ukrainian dishes; religion plays an integral role in the lives of Ukrainian older adults, and, they prefer to die amongst their own people, and where possible, at home.

The data required for this module was gathered from individuals employed in a personal care home and from the Ukrainian older adults themselves. All of the individuals had direct contact with the Ukrainian older adult, most on a daily basis.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

With respect to the Ukrainian older adult population, you will be able to :

(1) describe several verbal communication practices of Ukrainian older adults.

(2) identify several non-verbal communication practices of Ukrainian older adults.

(3) describe the cultural issues surrounding adjustment to selected life events.

(4) describe the psychological reactions that Ukrainian older adults have to selected life events.

(5) describe ways in which the worker can facilitate adjustment.

The following section will present several verbal communication practices common to Ukrainian older adults and the cultural barriers that exist between themselves and their caregiver workers.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

Upon completion of this section, you will be able to describe several verbal communication practices of Ukrainian older adults.

Language Barriers

For many of the older adults a language barrier exists between themselves and their caregiver workers. Most of today's older Ukrainians could, at one time, speak at least some English. However, some of the older adults, primarily for reasons of psychological disability, have not retained their English language skills, and communicate only in the Ukrainian language. Of those who have retained their English language skills, most are not completely fluent in English and often cannot express themselves effectively in this language.

Caregiver workers who could not speak Ukrainian stated that since the majority of older adults in their care were Ukrainians they had learned such basic words and phrases in the Ukrainian language such as 'eat', 'sleep', 'does it hurt?' and the like. This allows them

to at least look after the older adult's basic daily needs. The drawback, however, is that these workers cannot effectively communicate with the older adult in a broader sense. When more than their limited knowledge of the Ukrainian language is required, they must rely on Ukrainian speaking workers to translate for them.

Today's older Ukrainian adults are, for the most part, poorly educated and tend to speak dialectal forms of the Ukrainian language rather than the literary form. As well, many older adults incorporate the use of many Ukrainianized English words into their speech. The resulting form of the Ukrainian language that they speak is common to many Ukrainian Canadians and understandable to most Ukrainian speakers in Canada.

Conversely, however, it is often difficult for the speakers of the dialectal form of the Ukrainian language to understand the literary form of the Ukrainian language. Since the literary form encompasses a broader vocabulary and more complex phraseology and grammatical structures than they are accustomed to incorporating into their speech, it is often difficult to understand. Thus, when speaking to the older adult the caregiver worker must attempt to speak Ukrainian in such a way as to make himself or herself easily understood.

There are also situations where a Ukrainian speaking caregiver may at first be reluctant to speak

the dialectal form of the language. If so, it is usually because of his or her cultural orientation, which, in this case, might be better defined as a kind of cultural snobbery that percieves the other form of the Ukrainian language as inferior to the literary form. The caregiver-worker may think it demeaning to speak the dialectal form.

However, the perception of inferiority should be completely disregarded in these types of situations, for in dealing with the Ukrainian older adult the caregiver-worker's sole concern should be effective communication. Of the four (4) caregiver-workers who spoke Ukrainian only, one stated that she could not always make herself understood to the older adults nor could she always understand them. The other three caregiver-workers stated that they themselves spoke the same dialectal form of the Ukrainian language as the Ukrainian older adults and therefore experienced no communication difficulties.

Self Expression

Most of the older adults, unless hampered by psychological or physical disabilities or a language barrier, appear to have little or no problems with self-expression. They realize their needs, concerns and interests and usually do not hesitate to make them known. Some newcomers to the personal care home are hesitant, at first, to speak their minds, particularly since many of them are used to complying to the wishes of those people in authority. This often stems from their low self-image, wherein they see themselves as inferior to those better educated than themselves. However, this hesitancy usually disappears quickly as they observe the behavior of other resident older adults.

Every day, in this facility, the alert older adults gather in groups and spend long periods of time together talking. This is a highly enjoyable daily pastime. Their conversations are based on topics that are important to themselves, such as family, health and past experiences. The caregiver-workers noted that the older adults particularly enjoy gossipping about each other and the workers that they come into contact with. This is because these are the individuals who influence their daily lives and therefore are of particular interest to them.

Most caregiver-workers also noted that Ukrainian women were usually more talkative than their male counterparts, particularly to the caregiver-workers. Although the caregiver-workers believed that this was a typical female trait that spanned cultural boundaries it might also stem from a cultural basis.

Most caregiver-workers are female and the Ukrainian Canadian older adult male may feel he is superior by means of his masculinity to the female workers, and therefore is not as talkative to them.

Possible Constraints

Many caregiver-workers noted that Ukrainian older adults tend to interact with other Ukrainians. This does not mean that they are completely unwilling to interact with other cultural group members, but rather for reasons of a common language bond prefer to associate themselves with other older adults of Ukrainian origin. Several caregiver-workers revealed that some Ukrainian people in their care also preferred to have little or nothing to do with older adults of certain other cultural groups, such as Polish and Russian. To some extent this can be explained by the fact that Poland and Russia are historically regarded as Ukraine's enemy nations and some of the older adults continue to nurture resentment toward representatives of these cultural groups.

Ukrainian older adults have had limited exposure to non-Caucasian caregiver - workers. Some caregiver - workers, though not all, feel that once the older adults become better acquainted with non-Caucasian staff workers their biases diminish if not vanish completely.

Knowing the Ukrainian language can facilitate communication and adjustment between the worker and the older adult.

The following section will present several non-verbal communication practices as they apply to the Ukrainian older adult.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

Upon completion of this section, you will be able to identify several non-verbal communication practices of Ukrainian older adults.

Non-verbal communication practices are used by both the older adult who can and cannot speak in order to convey comprehensible messages to others.

If an individual suffers from speech impairment or loss of speech he or she usually communicates by means of gesticulation (gesture or mime). However, neither the caregiver-workers nor the older adults usually know International Sign Language. The caregiver-workers believed that gesticulation adequately serves both their and the older adults' needs. Written communication between the older adult and the caregiver-worker is not usually relied upon to any great extent. Many of the Ukrainian older adults cannot communicate effectively in writing in either language, either for reasons of disability or lack of education.

Many caregiver-workers stated that older Ukrainians do not display a form of body language in any way unique

to their cultural group. By observing their body language the caregiver-workers can interpret expressions of pain, pleasure, anger and the like, but no more or less readily than he or she could by observing an individual of another cultural group.

The following section will present the cultural issues surrounding adjustment to selected life events.

ADJUSTMENT TO SELECTED LIFE EVENTS

Upon completion of this section, you will be able to describe the cultural issues surrounding adjustment to selected life events.

Family

Many older adults are physically and/or mentally disabled to some extent. Once they become infirm, they are forced to give up living independently and either move in with one of their children or enter a personal care home. If given a choice, most older adults would prefer to live with family members rather than in a personal care home. Many older adults living in personal care homes also believe that they have been abandoned by their families. Their ability or inability to adjust to their physical disability or change in their living environments significantly influences the individual's overall psychological and physical well-being.

Traditionally, Ukrainians have always cared for older family members at home. Many of today's older adults still believe in this tradition. They view this as a sign of familial love and concern for them.

Furthermore, most believe that they not only deserve, but have earned this from their children through years of hard work and sacrifice on their behalf.

However, once living with an offspring, the older adult may find that it is difficult to adjust to this new living environment. They may resent the loss of personal independence that is usually associated with this type of move. Those older adults who had lived with their children stated that loss of personal independence, together with having to alter their lifestyle to suit the lifestyle of their children, were the most difficult adjustments to make. Those who expected to be treated with reverence and respect traditionally afforded by Ukrainian society to the older adult may, to their disappointment, find that such is no longer the case. If solicited at all, their views on familial or other concerns, may either be ignored or berated for being outdated. Even with the difficulties faced in adjusting to life with their children the older adults believed that this was preferable to living in an institutional setting. Older Ukrainians value life with children not only for the sense of security it awards them, but also for the fact that their lifelong expectations that their children would care for them in their old age have been fulfilled. Thus, it is difficult for the older adults to understand and

cope with the situation being otherwise.

They fear life in an institutional setting, for they see it as a place where those no longer useful to their families and society are forced to go to await imminent death.

They fail to realize that societal norms and lifestyles have changed significantly in recent years. As a result, many families who might otherwise be willing, are no longer able to care for the older adult at home. Once in an institutional setting the older adults who think this way may express considerable hostility toward their families for having "abandoned" them in such a way. Some, for example, make no effort at all to adjust to their new living environment, refusing all types of social interaction and even nourishment and medication. The caregiver-workers noted, however, that over time most do adjust to the institutional living environment once they realistically come to terms with the reasons why their families cannot care for them.

Religious Conviction

Ukrainians have always been a deeply religious people whose fervent belief in God has sustained them through an often arduous collective and individual existence. Once disabled, the older adults do not tend to turn away from God as if blaming Him for their misfortune. Instead, their deeprooted faith allows many of them to simply accept their disability as the unquestionable will of God. Others, realizing that their lives are drawing to an end, turn to their faith with an even deeper fervence in the desire to spiritually prepare themselves for death.

Personal Possessions

A change in the older adult's living environment, such as those discussed above, often also signals a loss of personal possessions. Many of these hold significant sentimental value to the older adult although they may seem worthless to the caregiver-workers. Several caregiver-workers noted that the older adult's adjustment to an institutional setting was often greatly facilitated by the fact that they were able to bring certain valued and/or familiar objects with them to the personal care home.

Disability of Other Family Members

Most older Ukrainians can accept their own disability much better than they can accept the illness or disability of another family member. They display an entirely selfless concern for the well-being of their family members. When another family member is ill it is typical for the older adult to wish that he or she could suffer this malady in place of this other person. The reason is that since they are already old and often disabled it should be their turn to suffer and even die in place of the afflicted family member. The affliction of a family member may thus absorb most of their thoughts and may become the subject they care to discuss most often.

Sexual Disability

Most older Ukrainian adults are able to accept

sexual disability as an integral part of aging. The majority of the caregiver-workers stated that Ukrainian older adults in their care were no longer interested in sex. As it is not a life threatening disability, those who are sexually disabled usually adjust to it well. However, it was also noted that the few older adults who are still interested in engaging in sexual activity are generally prohibited from doing so since it is their facility's policy to forbid sexual relations between the residents. Therefore, it was believed by several caregiver-workers, that personal care home staff require a greater understanding of the older adults' sexual needs. All of the caregiver-workers believed that there appeared to be no specific cultural issues associated with adjustment to this disability.

Marriage and Re-Marriage

Older Ukrainians highly value the institution of marriage. Many of the older adults are widowed and it is not common for them to remarry. The caregiver-workers stated that most of the older adults do not remarry out of respect for the memory of their deceased spouse. They believe that upon the death of a spouse the individual's main concern should be the children and grandchildren. Remarriage is considered to be an acceptable option only for those who are childless or alone for other reasons. Remarriage for other reasons was not readily acceptable to older Ukrainians (who were all widowed), and indeed, one older adult stated that it was even immoral.

Most of the older adults have never separated from or divorced their spouses. One of the reasons for this may be that a large number of Ukrainians are Catholics and their faith does not forgive divorce. Another reason may be that the traditional Ukrainian value system attaches significant stigma to this practice. Separated couples are thought to be most apt to reconcile in their old age, if ever, since it is then that most either realize that they need someone to care for their needs, or in the case of Catholics, fear the consequences of disobeying religious laws.

Gain of New Family Member

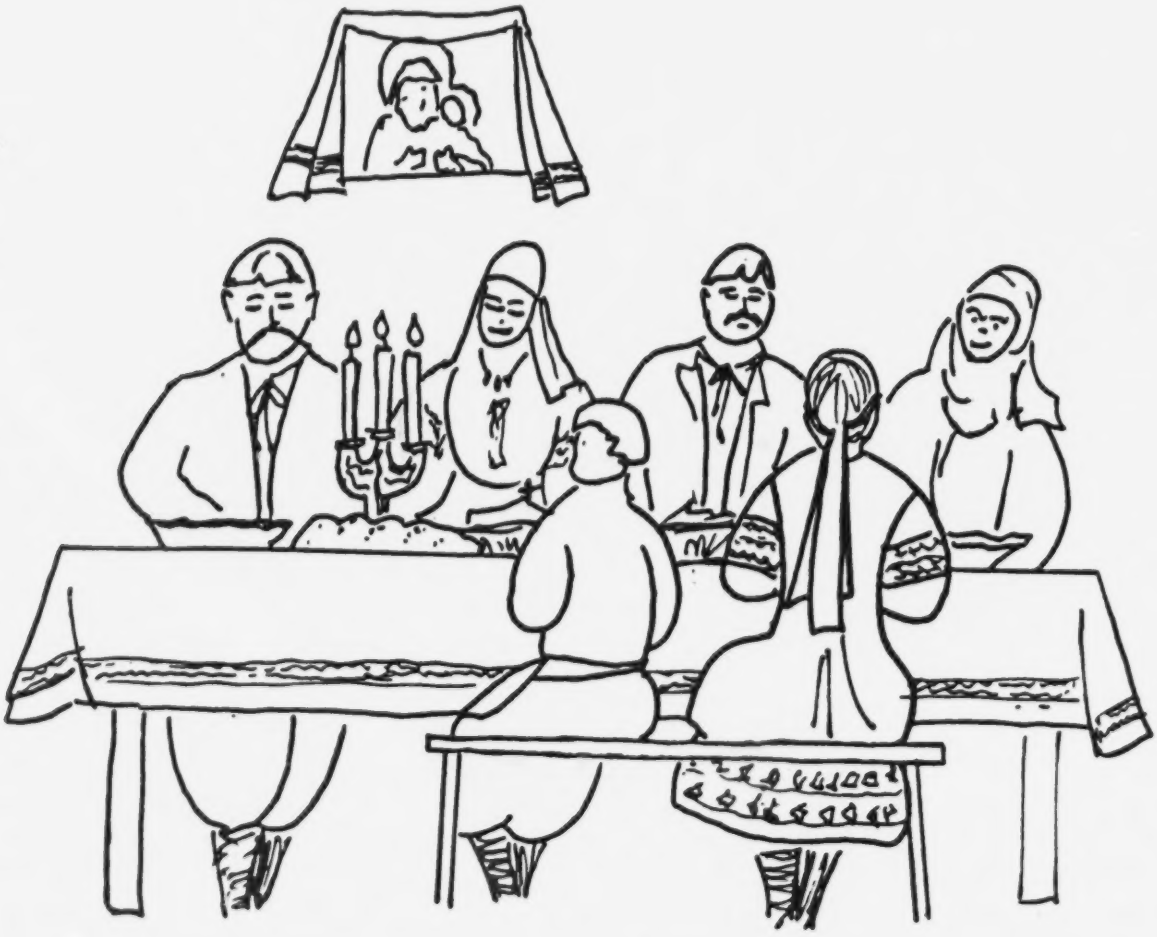
Most older adults are not overly affected by the gain of new family members through marriage or birth, although they join with their families to celebrate these events. Those residing in institutional settings are least affected by these events since they are removed from daily contact with their families. Those that are not institutionalized, however, are more affected because of a greater degree of direct contact. Regardless of where they reside, the older adults are usually minimally affected by these events since they do not directly relate to them and, therefore, their adjustment to them is also generally minimal.

Family Get-Togethers

Older adults living in an institutional setting are genuinely most happy in the company of their family members. However, they are no longer able to interact with their families as often as they would like to. This is a great disappointment to many of them for they miss the family get-togethers and long to still be a vital part of the family unit.

It is very important for them to spend major holidays such as Christmas and Easter with their

families since these are the traditional times when families gather and celebrate together.



If, for some reason, they are unable to do so, they usually lapse into a depression. Those caregiver-workers employed at this particular facility stated that their staff served traditional foods and tried to observe some traditional Ukrainian customs on these occasions. This helped ease some of the older adults

depression but nothing could dissipate it altogether, for the need to be with their families was generally too strong to be readily overcome.

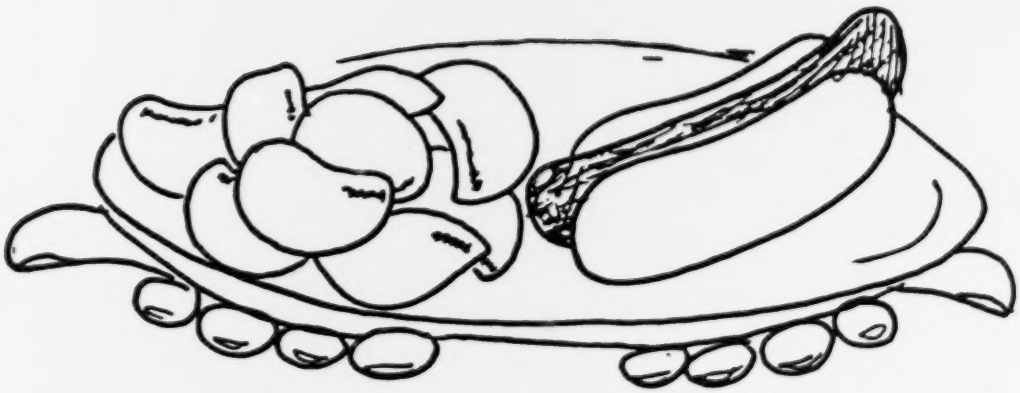
Friends

Older adults who do not live in personal care homes usually continue to have regular contact with friends and retain at least some interests outside their family sphere. However, those who reside in institutions usually have little outside contact with anyone other than their families. They are usually able to realistically cope with the fact that they have lost contact with old friends. Firstly, because they realize that it is now very difficult for them to keep in touch with their friends, as they are also older and perhaps incapacitated as well. They may often reminisce about their old friends and the good times they had together. Those who reside in personal care homes generally do not long for these past friendships because they make new friends there.

Change in Eating Patterns

The traditional Ukrainian diet consists of foods high in starch and carbohydrate content. Many older adults, for reasons of physical disability, can no longer eat such foods in quantity. Many are not bothered to any great extent by their change in eating

patterns. Most realize that advanced age or physical disability no longer allow them to eat the types of food they favour, nor the quantities they may have been accustomed to eating in the past. This understanding allows them to effectively adjust to a diet more suited to their physical requirements. However, whenever possible, traditional Ukrainian dishes should be included in their diet. This will alleviate the belief shared by some of the older adults that they are being forced to eat "foreign" food without any consideration of their personal preferences.



This is most appreciated at times such as Christmas and Easter when Ukrainian tradition calls for the serving of certain specific dishes.

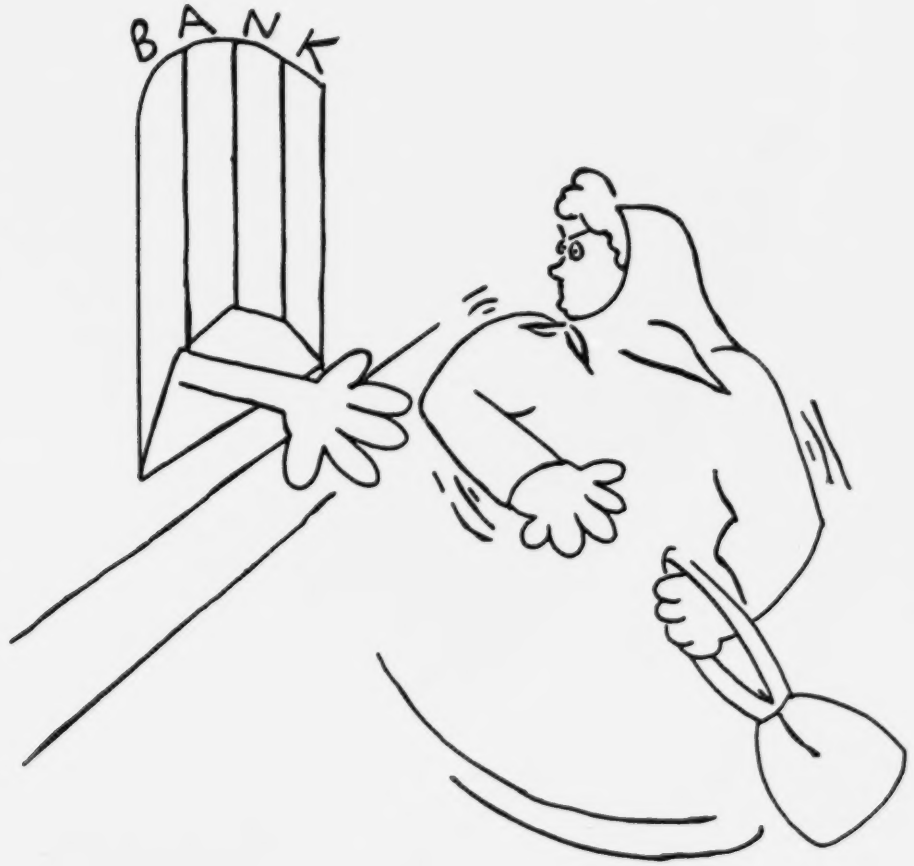
Recreational Activities

Many of the older adults have never had the opportunity to vacation extensively or to be involved in various types of recreational activities. The Ukrainians of their generation were mostly concerned with establishing themselves and their families in Canada. Generally, their lives primarily consisted of hard, often physical work, that left little time for other interests. The few leisure time activities they took part in generally revolved around religious, cultural and political organizations amongst other activities. Their advanced age and/or physical disabilities keep the majority of them from continuing to take an active part in these activities. Most realize, however, why they can no longer do so and are able to accept this fact.

Personal Finances

Most of the older adults are still very concerned with their personal finances. Many seem to be primarily concerned with saving money rather than spending it. This may be due to the fact that many have known poverty at some time in their lives and dread being poor again. They tend to regard their personal finances as a highly private concern. Therefore, it is extremely difficult

for many of them to adjust to someone else looking after their financial matters. A number of older adults, especially those who have been medically declared as mentally incompetent, their finances are being administered by a committee or public trustee. Others are suspicious of banks and other financial institutions, fearing improper administration of their funds.



Some also fear that their children are indiscriminately spending their money without their consultation or consent.

The following section will present the psychological reactions that Ukrainian older adults experience regarding selected life events.

PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTIONS TO SELECTED LIFE EVENTS

Upon completion of this section, you will be able to describe the psychological reactions that Ukrainian older adults have to selected life events.

Psychological reaction to disability and changes in the living environment are largely regarded as a highly individualistic matter that transcends cultural boundaries. However, certain generalities do appear to apply to older Ukrainians.

For example, most caregiver-workers noted that although many older adults appear to be constantly anxious about their state of health, most are able to accept their own physical disabilities philosophically either as the will of God or an integral part of the aging process. Some of them (one caregiver-worker stated that this was true of men in particular) react to their disability with anger and disbelief. These individuals find it extremely difficult to come to terms with it and may require special counselling. They may feel sorry for themselves and complain about their health constantly. Some may, even suffer mental

breakdowns, although this appears to be true of only a small minority.

Few of them attempt to actually overcome their physical disabilities to any significant extent, as most realize that it would be impossible for them to do so. Although some may hope that their disabilities will improve, most realize their disabilities will not show any marked improvement. This appears to be particularly true of those older adults suffering from cancer, heart disease, diabetes, blindness or hearing loss. Stroke victims appear to be the only ones that realistically hope for an improvement in their condition, as it is known that some disabilities caused by stroke. i.e. paralysis, loss of speech, can, in fact show improvement. This does not mean, however, that once disabled, all of the older adults adopt a fatalistic attitude toward their disability. Although this may be true of a small minority, the majority, over time, are usually able to realistically come to terms with their disabilities and accept their limitations and consequences.

Those who cannot readily adjust to a change in their living environment may, as a result, exhibit signs of depression, hostility or withdrawal. The degrees to which they exhibit such traits vary from individual to individual and are dependent upon the

types of changes that have occurred. Many, for example, suffer at least some degree of trauma when they first become residents of a personal care home. In some cases they may even require professional counselling to help them cope with this change. Most of the older adults are able to adjust to these changes. Some because they are able to realistically come to terms with them, others, because they resign themselves to them.

The following section will present the ways in which the worker can facilitate adjustment.

HOW THE WORKER CAN FACILITATE ADJUSTMENT

Upon completion of this section, you will be able to describe the ways in which the worker can facilitate adjustment.

The worker can play an extremely effective role in facilitating the individual's adjustment to his or her disability. In order to do so the worker must attempt to develop an insight into the reasons why the older adult is reacting to his or her disability in a particular way. The reasons may be of a personal and/or cultural nature. Once having done so, the worker should employ a compassionate approach in attempting to stimulate the individuals adjustment. However, it is extremely important to treat the individual as an adult. The worker should not deny reality in hopes of easing their fears. The worker's primary aim should be to guide the disabled individual toward a rational outlook on his or her own disability.

The worker should also constantly be aware of the fact that the older adult regardless of disabilty, still possesses certain social needs. Whenever possible, therefore, the disabled person should not be permitted

to withdraw from social interaction. Workers are in the position where they can encourage interaction between the disabled individual and other residents and their possible involvement in social and recreational activities. Workers could suggest that family members visit more often and could also recommend that volunteers spend time with them.

Most importantly, the worker should be prepared to spend quality time with these individuals as they come into contact with them most often.

The ways in which the worker can facilitate an individual's adjustment to a change in their own living environment are very similar to the ways that the worker facilitates the older adult's adjustment to disabilty.

In order to be effective, the worker also must first attempt to determine why the older adult is reacting in a particular way, then, employ a compassionate approach in an attempt to stimulate the individual's adjustment. Again, the worker should be careful not to deny reality in the hopes of easing the individual's fears, but rather guide the individual toward a rational acceptance of this change.

It is often most difficult for the older Ukrainian adult to accept having to live in a personal care home. If a worker perceives that an older adult is not effectively adjusting to the personal care home setting, he or she can facilitate the socialization process by seeing to it that this individual becomes involved in social and recreational activities and encourage friendship with other residents. The worker can also encourage the family to visit often in order to reassure the individual that they have not been abandoned. If necessary, the worker can also recommend

professional counselling. Most importantly the worker should also be prepared to act as a counsellor to the older adult since it is the worker who comes into contact with him or her most often and may therefore be the one person that the individual feels he/she can rely upon.

SUMMARY

The traditional values and lifestyles may have undergone tremendous change in contemporary Canadian society, however, as the Communication and Adjustment module has shown you, for many of the older adults a language barrier still exists between themselves and their caregivers. In fact, the module has also shown you that most of the older adults still prefer to communicate in the Ukrainian language.

When speaking about self-expression, the module has shown that most older Ukrainian adults, unless hampered by psychological or physical disabilities or a language barrier, appear to have little or no problems with self-expression. They realize their needs, concerns and interests and usually do not hesitate to make them known.

For reasons of a common language bond, most caregiver workers noted that the older adults preferred to interact with other Ukrainians.

The module also pointed out that some of the older adults, for historical reasons, continue to nurture resentment toward representatives of the Polish and Russian culture groups.

It was also noted that non-verbal communication practices are utilized by both the older adult who can and cannot speak in order to convey comprehensible messages to others. Many caregiver-workers stated that, older Ukrainians do not display a form of body language in any way unique to their cultural group. The caregiver-workers also believed that, by observing their body language, the workers can adequately interpret expressions of pain, pleasure, anger and the like and can adequately serve the older adults needs.

If given a choice, the module also showed that most older adults would prefer to live with family members rather than in a personal care home. Many of today's older Ukrainian adults still believe in this tradition. They view this as a sign of familial love and concern for them. Even with the difficulties faced in adjusting to life with an offspring the older adults still believed that this was preferable to living in an institutional setting. They fear life in an institutional setting, for they see it as a place where those no longer useful to their families and society are forced to go to await imminent death. Thus, it is

difficult for them to understand and cope with the situation being otherwise. However, adjustment to an institutional setting, can often be greatly facilitated by the fact that the older adults are able to bring certain valued and familiar objects with them to the personal care home.

Most older adults also display an entirely selfless concern for their family members. When another family member falls ill or becomes disabled, it is typical for them to wish that he or she could suffer this malady in place of this other person. Such an event may absorb most of their thoughts and may become the subject they care to discuss most often.

When speaking about sexual disability, most older adults are able to accept it as an integral part of aging. However, it was also noted that the few older adults who are still interested in engaging in sexual activity require a greater understanding from their personal care home staff.

Ukrainian older adults highly value the institution of marriage. Many older Ukrainians are widowed, but the caregiver workers noted that they do not remarry out of respect for the memory of their deceased spouse. Remarriage is considered to be an acceptable option only for those who are childless or for other reasons are alone.

Most of the older adults are not overly affected by the gain of new family members through marriage or birth, although they join their families to celebrate these events. Older adults living in an institutional setting are genuinely most happy in the company of their family members. They long to still be a vital part of the family unit. Major holidays such as Christmas and Easter are of particular importance to them since these are the traditional times when families gather and celebrate. If they are unable to get together with their family at these special occassions, they usually lapse into a depression.

The traditional Ukrainian diet consists of foods high in starch and carbohydrate content. However, most older adults realize, that advanced age or physical disability no longer allow them to eat the types of foods they favour, nor the quantities they may have been accustomed to eating in the past. Efforts should be made though to include traditional Ukrainian dishes in their diet. This will alleviate the belief shared by some of the older adults that they are being forced to eat "foreign" food without any consideration for their personal preferences.

Most of the older adults tend to regard their personal finances as a highly private concern. Because many have known poverty at sometime in their lives and

dread being poor again, many of the older adults seem to be primarily concerned with saving their money rather than spending it.

Psychological reaction to disability and psychological reaction to changes in the living environment are largely regarded as a highly individualistic matter that transcends cultural boundaries. However, the module did note that although many of the older adults appear to be constantly anxious about their state of health, most are able to accept their own physical disabilities philosophically either as the will of God or an integral part of the aging process. Those who cannot readily adjust to their disability or to a change in their living environment may even require professional help.

The caregiver-worker can also play an extremely effective role in facilitating the person's adjustment, but must first determine the reasons behind the older adults reactions. They may be of a personal and cultural nature. In any case, it is extremely important to treat the individual as an adult and guide the individual toward a rational acceptance of their own disability or adjustment to their living environment. Whenever it is appropriate, the worker should; encourage interaction between the disabled individual and other residents, involve the individual in social and recreational

activities, encourage the family to visit often in order to reassure the older adult that they have not been "abandoned", employ a compassionate approach in an attempt to stimulate the individual's adjustment, and above all, be prepared to spend quality time with the older adults as they come into contact with them in their daily work.

APPENDIX

Selected Readings

Kovacs, L. Martin. (Ed.) (1978). Ethnic Canadians: Culture and Education. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina, Canada.

Marunchak, H. M. (Ed.) (1982). The Ukrainian Canadians: A History. 2nd ed. Winnipeg: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Canada.

Migus, M. Paul. (Ed.) (1975). Sounds Canadian:Languages and cultures in Multi-Ethnic Society. Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Ltd.

Petryshyn, W. Roman. (Ed.) (1980). Changing Realities: Social Trends Among Ukrainian Canadians. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, Canada.

Yuzyk, Paul. (1982). "Religious Life," in A Heritage in Transition. :143-172.

Additional Resources

Place: National Film Board of Canada
245 Main St.
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 1A7

I've Never Walked The Steppes

A visit to a family of Ukrainian-Canadians at Christmas, a time when the rich traditional customs are most in evidence. The family is that of a prosperous Winnipeg lawyer, a son of immigrants who has reason for pride in his accomplishment. From the carols and folk tunes at the gathering, from pictures in the family album, from the midnight Mass and the Christmas feast, there emerges a warm, compelling portrait of Ukrainian-Canadians at home in Canada.

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28 minutes 106C 0175 018

Luchak's Easter

A Ukrainian Easter tradition is celebrated by a Ukrainian-Canadian family in Alberta. Coinciding with the time of Christ's Resurrection, ceremonies are held in anticipation of the resurrection of those ancestors who have died. The family graveyard is decorated, religious rites are performed, and a family feast is held.

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26 minutes:37 seconds 106C 0178 438

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ELDERLY SERVICE WORKERS' TRAINING PROJECT (ESWTP)

TITLES OF THE TRAINING PROJECT'S MODULES

Block A: Basic Knowledge of Aging Process

A.1 Program Planning for Older Adults **
A.2 Stereotypes of Aging **
A.3 Human Development Aspects of Aging **
A.4 Social Aspects of Aging **
A.5 Physiological Aspects of Aging **
A.6 Death and Bereavement **
A.7 Psychological Aspects of Aging **
A.8 Confusion and the Older Adult **
A.9 Nutrition and the Older Adult **
A.10 Listening and the Older Adult **

Block B: Cultural Gerontology

B.1 Ukrainian Culture **
B.1.1 Communication and Adjustment *
B.1.2 Communication and Adjustment *

B.2 German Culture **
B.2.1 Communication and Adjustment *

B.3 French Culture *
B.3.1 Communication and Adjustment *

B.4 Native Culture *
B.4.1 Communication and Adjustment *
B.4.2 Communication and Adjustment *

Block C: Work Environment

C.1 Work Environment I *

Resource Materials:

Handbook of Selected Case Studies
User's Guide
ESWTP Authoring System
ESWTP Final Report

Please Note:

ALL MODULES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE PRINT FORMAT. THE CODE FOR IDENTIFYING OTHER FORMATS IS LISTED BELOW.

Code	Format
*	Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI) Courseware
**	Interactive Video (Tape)/Computer-Assisted Television Courseware